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AMAZING TALES

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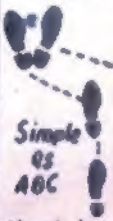

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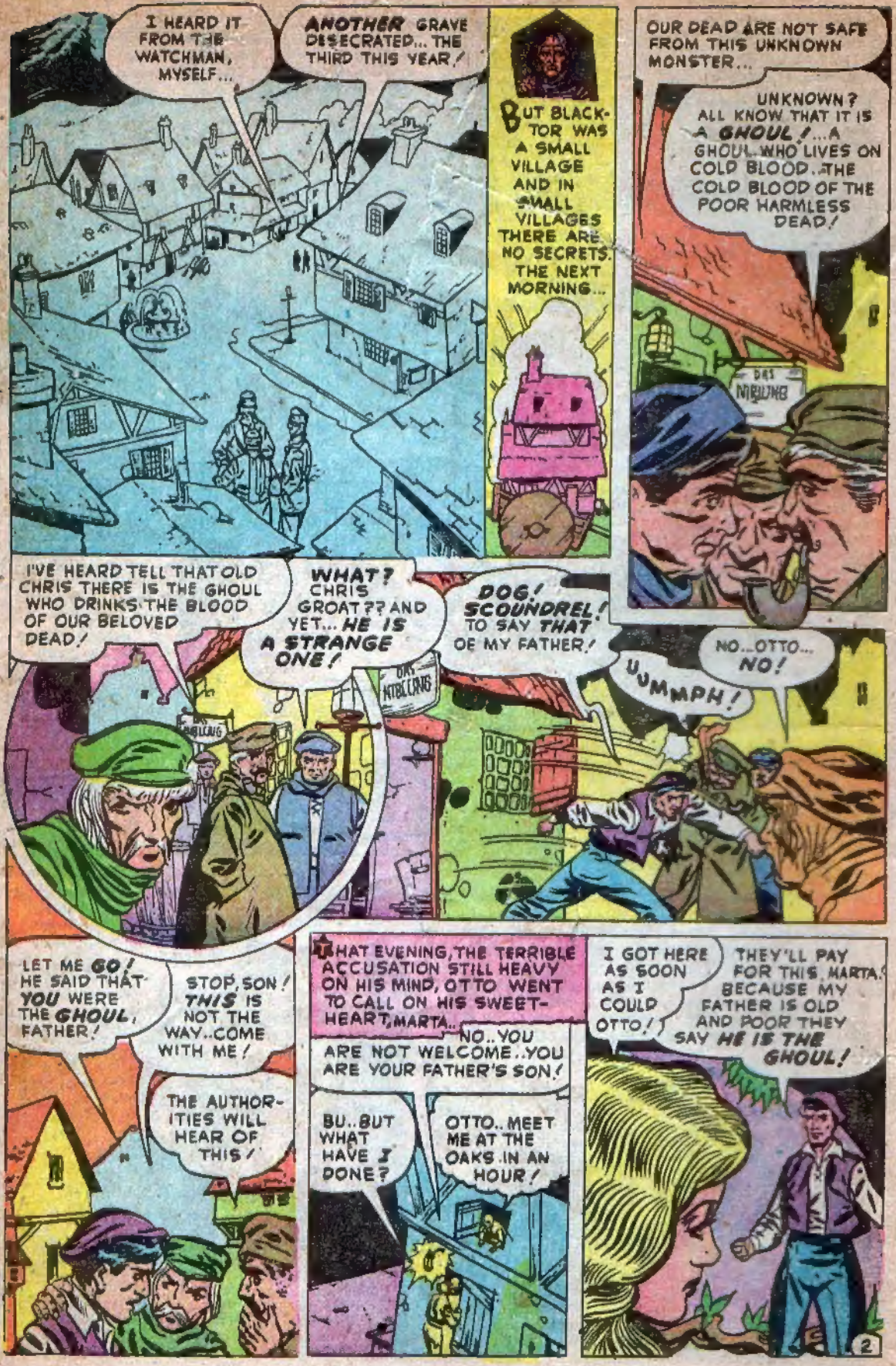

I HEARD IT FROM THE WATCHMAN, MYSELF...
ANOTHER GRAVE DESECRATED... THE THIRD THIS YEAR!
BUT BLACKTOR WAS A SMALL VILLAGE AND IN SMALL VILLAGES THERE ARE NO SECRETS. THE NEXT MORNING...
OUR DEAD ARE NOT SAFE FROM THIS UNKNOWN MONSTER...
UNKNOWN? ALL KNOW THAT IT IS A GHOUL!...A GHOUL..WHO LIVES ON COLD BLOOD..THE COLD BLOOD OF THE POOR HARMLESS DEAD!
I'VE HEARD TELL THAT OLD CHRIS THERE IS THE GHOUL WHO DRINKS THE BLOOD OF OUR BELOVED DEAD!
WHAT? CHRIS GROAT?? AND YET... HE IS A STRANGE ONE!
DOG! SCOUNDREL! TO SAY THAT OF MY FATHER!
UJMMPH!
NO...OTTO... NO!
LET ME GO! HE SAID THAT YOU WERE THE GHOUL, FATHER!
STOP, SON! THIS IS NOT THE WAY..COME WITH ME!
THE AUTHORITIES WILL HEAR OF THIS!
THAT EVENING, THE TERRIBLE ACCUSATION STILL HEAVY ON HIS MIND, OTTO WENT TO CALL ON HIS SWEETHEART, MARTA..
NO..YOU ARE NOT WELCOME..YOU ARE YOUR FATHER'S SON!
BU..BUT WHAT HAVE I DONE?
OTTO..MEET ME AT THE OAKS IN AN HOUR!
I GOT HERE AS SOON AS I COULD OTTO!
THEY'LL PAY FOR THIS, MARTA! BECAUSE MY FATHER IS OLD AND POOR THEY SAY HE IS THE GHOUL!
2

THEY'RE AFRAID.. THEY HAVE TO BLAME SOMEONE!
BUT WHY MY FATHER.. WHY?
OTTO GROAT AND MARTA MEET IN SECRET....

WHILE BACK IN TOWN THE MEN OF THE VILLAGE HAD DECIDED TO TAKE MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS....
THE POLICE ARE POWERLESS!
WE MUST BE OUR OWN POLICE!
WE'LL CATCH OUR OWN GHOUL!

I SAY CHRIS GROAT IS OUR MAN!
WE HAVE NO PROOF.. JUST RUMOR!!
WE'LL GET PROOF THEN!
DEATH TO THE GHOUL!

AND SO WAS FORMED THE BLACKTOR VIGILANTE COMMITTEE..DEDICATED TO SEEKING OUT AND DESTROYING THE GHOUL! EARLY THE NEXT MORNING....
A COMMITTEE WAS FORMED LAST NIGHT... I'LL JOIN TODAY!
SON, TAKE CARE! WE GROATS HAVE A BAD NAME IN BLACKTOR!

SO... YOU REFUSE ME! YOU ARE AFRAID OF ME!
NO, OTTO BUT THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS ABOUT YOUR FATHER!
THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN RUMORS ABOUT THE GROATS... AND... YOU ARE A GROAT!!

STRUGGLING TO HIDE TEARS OF ANGER AND FRUSTRATION OTTO TURNED AND STRODE FROM THE SQUARE...
JUST WAIT MY LADDIE BUCK UNTIL WE CATCH YOUR FATHER IN THE CEMETERY COMING FROM AN OPEN COFFIN, STILL SMACKING HIS LIPS, AND ...WE START WATCHING TONIGHT!
WHEN I MARRY MY LOVELY MARTA WE WILL LEAVE THIS HATEFUL TOWN FOREVER!!

THE WEEKS PASSED AND THE GHOUL HUNTERS HID EACH NIGHT IN THE CEMETERY...
BAH...'TIS USELESS. MY RHEUMATISM..
AT LEAST NO GRAVES HAVE BEEN OPENED, WHILE WE WATCH HERE.
TRUE.. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN NO BURIALS!
ONE DAY AN ENRAGED BULL ATTACKED MARTA AND OTTO...
OTTO! YOU'VE COME ... MY DARLING, I'VE MISSED YOU SO! I'VE....
MARTA.. LOOK OUT! COME FOLLOW ME!
BUT MARTA DID NOT GET AWAY....
MARTA (GASP) MY MARTA...DEAD...OH, LET ME DIE TOO!
I TOO FEAR THE GROATS, BUT IT WAS NOT THE BOY'S FAULT!!
ARE YOU CERTAIN?
THE GROATS WEAR TERROR AND TROUBLE LIKE A CLOAK!
MY POOR MARTA! SO YOUNG! SO DEAR!
THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON A SORROWFUL PROCESSION SLOWLY MADE ITS WAY TO THE VILLAGE CEMETERY... TO BURY MARTA..
THE GHOUL WILL SURELY STRIKE TONIGHT!
BUT...TONIGHT WE WILL DOUBLE THE GUARD!
A FACE...I SAW A BOOGY MAN'S FACE OVER THERE!
GROAT! WHERE IS OLD MAN GROAT?
THAT'S RIGHT, WHERE IS FATHER? HE WAS TO MEET ME HERE!
HE'S GETTING AWAY!
HALT! STOP!
WAS IT OLD GROAT?
4

SLIPPED AWAY... CLEAN AS A WHISTLE!
DID ANYONE GET A GOOD LOOK!
DID YOU SEE WHO IT WAS, OTTO?
NO..NO, I DIDN'T!

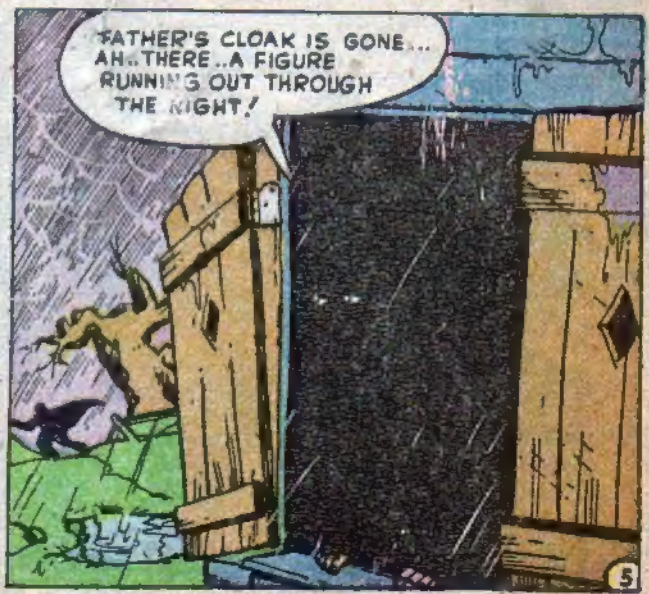
FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF THE INTERRUPTED FUNERAL YOUNG OTTO WALKED ON AND ON INTO THE GATHERING DUSK. HIS MIND A BLANK SAVE FOR ONE TERRIBLE, SEARING QUESTION...WAS HIS FATHER, IN ACTUALITY, THE GHOUL?? .....

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, IT'S AFTER SIX
OTTO!
FATHER, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

I DECIDED TO REMAIN HOME. I COULDN'T GO... YOU KNOW HOW THE NEIGHBORS TALK. I COULDN'T STAND YOUR SORROW AND THEIR WHISPERS!
YES..YES... I KNOW!

AFTER A HASTY MEAL OTTO WENT OUT TO THE BARN YARD AND HIS EVENING CHORES. MEANWHILE, IN THE VILLAGE.....
THE GHOUL HAS NOT FED RECENTLY.. NOR WILL IT TONIGHT!
I STILL THINK WE OUGHT TO WATCH THE GROATS AS WELL!
THE CEMETERY IS BEST!

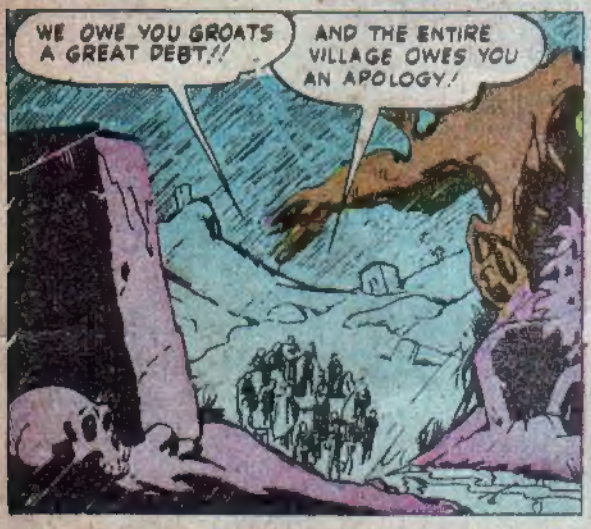
THE COWS MILKED, FODDER THROWN DOWN TO THE OXEN, OTTO RETURNED TO THE GLOOMY HOUSE..
FATHER!! WHERE ARE YOU? ANSWER ME!

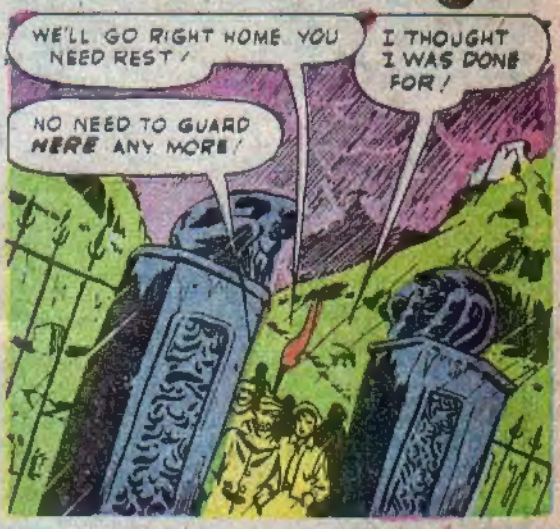

FATHER'S CLOAK IS GONE... AH..THERE..A FIGURE RUNNING OUT THROUGH THE NIGHT!

I MUST FOLLOW...I MUST KNOW!! HE'S MAKING FOR THE CEMETERY!
FATHER.. FATHER.. PERHAPS WHAT THEY SAY IS TRUE!
I'VE LOST HIM..HE WAS HERE BUT A MOMENT AGO.. HER GRAVE.. THAT'S WHERE HE'LL GO!
I THINK WE WATCH TOO FAR FROM THE GRAVE!
WE MUST GIVE THE GHOUL A CHANCE TO COME FOR HER IF WE ARE TO CATCH HIM!
I PRAY THAT I AM IN TIME!
SUDDENLY!!.... A FIEND ATTACKED OTTO..IT WAS NOT HIS FATHER.
ARRAGHH!!
FOUL FIEND!... (GASP)..HELP! (GASP)
AAARRGH!!
AND YET, I WELCOME YOU, FOR YOU ARE NOT MY FATHER!
6

ARRUGH!
GUARDS.. HELP.. HELP!
CHRIS GROAT HAS CAPTURED THE FIEND!
(GASP) CHOKE
THE FIEND! I'VE GOT HIM!!

THE GHOUL CAPTURED AT LAST.. AN ESCAPED LUNATIC!!
YES..AND ALL THE TIME I THOUGHT THE GROATS WERE RESPONSIBLE!
SO DID WE ALL.. IT SHOWS HOW WRONG PEOPLE CAN BE! LUCKY WE LEARNED IN TIME!
I'M ALL RIGHT NOW!


WE OWE YOU GROATS A GREAT DEBT!!
AND THE ENTIRE VILLAGE OWES YOU AN APOLOGY!


WE'LL GO RIGHT HOME. YOU NEED REST!
I THOUGHT I WAS DONE FOR!
NO NEED TO GUARD HERE ANY MORE!

SO..AN HOUR HAS PASSED. ALL SHOULD BE QUIET BY HER GRAVE..WE'LL RETURN NOW, OTTO!!
WHA..WHAT? FATHER, DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE SAYING?

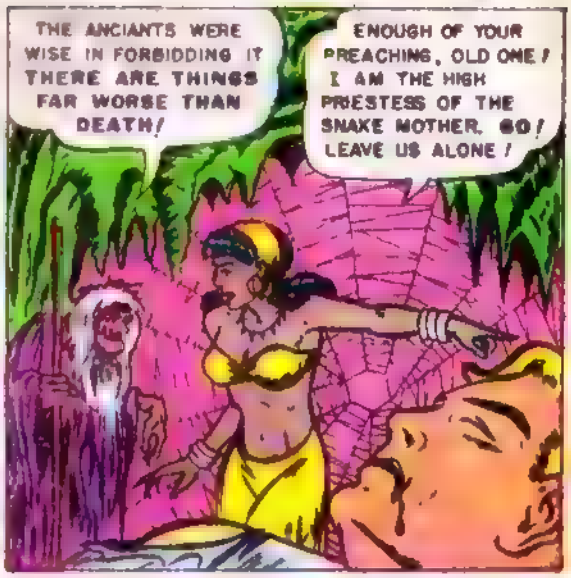
CERTAINLY. WE GROATS ARE THE GHOULS.. HAVE BEEN FOR GENERATIONS!! AND NOW, YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO LEARN HOW TO OPEN THE COLD, DARK GRAVES FOR WHAT'S INSIDE!! TONIGHT YOU WILL SEE MARTA AGAIN!

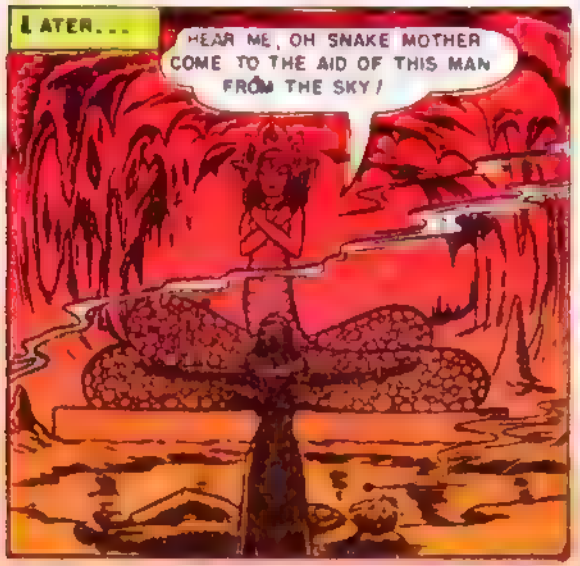
AS HIS FATHER SPOKE, AGE OLD DESIRES SURGED UP WITHIN OTTO AND HE KNEW THAT HE WAS ...A GHOUL! THAT NIGHT FIRED WITH ANTICIPATION THE TWO, FATHER AND SON, SLIPPED OUT INTO THE TERROR FILLED NIGHT..FOR GHOULS FEAST AT MIDNIGHT!
FOLLOW ME SOFTLY, MY BOY! I WILL TEACH YOU HOW!
I WILL BE SILENT AS DEATH IN THE NIGHT MY FATHER!
THE END

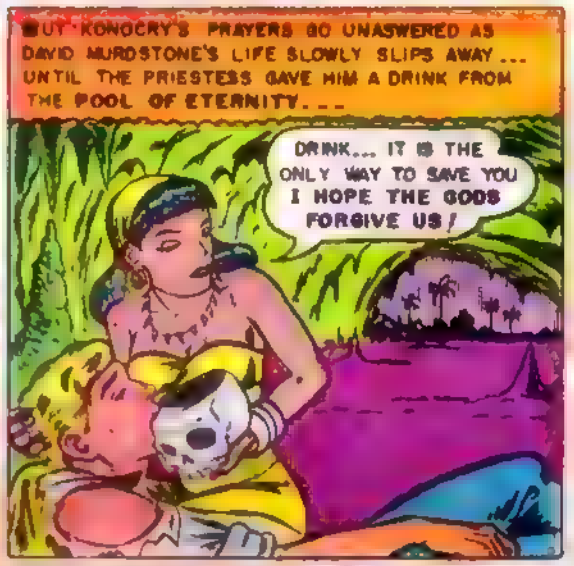
ADVENTURE DREAMS OF ETERNAL LIFE, DON'T THEY? HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO LIVE FOREVER? DAVID MORDSTONE FOUND THE SECRET OF ETERNAL LIFE, BUT LEARNED TOO LATE THAT THERE ARE THINGS WORSE THAN DEATH. WHEN HE FOUND
The POOL of ETERNITY
COME ON, YOU MURDERING DEVILS, DO YOUR WORST! YOU CAN'T KILL ME!
BEHOLD! HE HAS DESPOILED OUR GODDESS!
A STORMY NIGHT ABOVE THE SOUTH AMERICAN JUNGLE
GOOD LORD! WE'RE OUT OF GAS! I HOPE WE CAN GLIDE TO THE RIVER!
SPUT
SPUT
IT'S NO USE, DAVID! WE CAN'T MAKE IT!
LEVIATHAN
CRASH

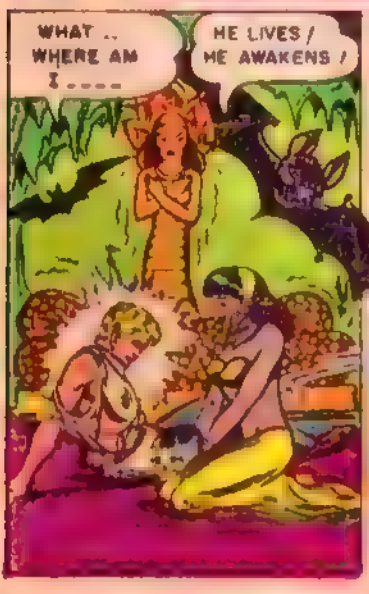
THE SILVER BIRD HAS FALLEN FROM THE SKY LET US SEARCH BENEATH IT
LOOK! THIS ONE IS ALIVE!
THE NATIVES CARRY THE BARELY LIVING FORM OF DAVID MURDSTONE BACK TO THEIR VILLAGE . . .
THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE THAT HE WILL LIVE . TAKE HIM TO THE TEMPLE. ONLY THE GODS CAN HELP HIM NOW!
WHO IS THIS THAT YOU BRING TO THE SHRINE OF THE SNAKE MOTHER?
AN INJURED TRAVELER, KONOCHY [redacted] WISDOM YOU COULD HEAL HIM. . .
LEAVE HIM THEN I SHALL ASK THE SNAKE MOTHER'S HELP!
HE-HE-HE! IT IS TOO LATE. ANYONE CAN SEE THAT HE IS NEARLY DEAD!
HE SHALL NOT DIE! I WILL CALL ON EVERY POWER OF THE GODS... AND IF NO OTHER SPELLS REVIVE HIM... THERE IS ALWAYS THE POOL OF ETERNITY!
WHAT! YOU MUST NOT BREAK THE TABOO OF THE SNAKE MOTHER FOR THE LIFE OF ONE MAN!
BUT IT MAY BE THE ONLY CHANCE TO SAVE HIM!
YOU KNOW IT IS FORBIDDEN THAT ANY PERSON OF OUR TRIBE DRINK THE SACRED WATER....
BUT MALA, THIS HANDSOME STRANGER IS NOT OF OUR TRIBE THE TABOO IS NOT CONCERNED WITH HIM. . . .

FOOLISH MAIDEN! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT THE SACRED WATERS ARE SAID TO BESTOW ETERNAL LIFE ON THOSE WHO DRINK THEM?
THEN IT SHOULD NOT BE FORBIDDEN TO DRINK. WHY SHOULD WE GROW OLD AND DIE IF WE DO NOT HAVE TO, MALA?


THE ANCIANTS WERE WISE IN FORBIDDING IT THERE ARE THINGS FAR WORSE THAN DEATH!
ENOUGH OF YOUR PREACHING, OLD ONE! I AM THE HIGH PRIESTESS OF THE SNAKE MOTHER. GO! LEAVE US ALONE!

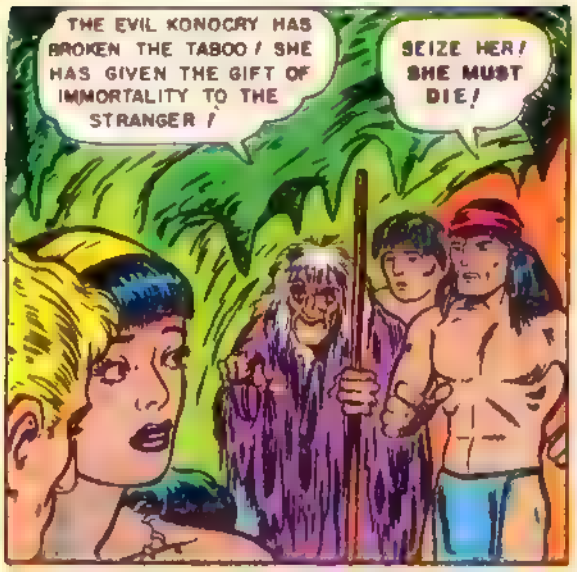

LATER...
HEAR ME, OH SNAKE MOTHER COME TO THE AID OF THIS MAN FROM THE SKY!

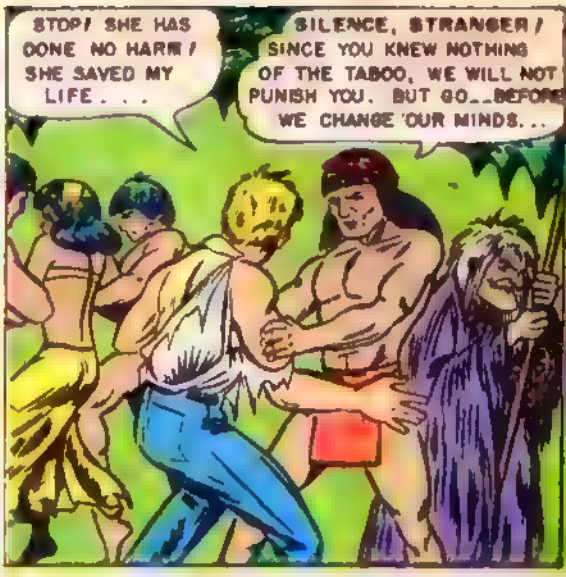

BUT KONOCRY'S PRAYERS GO UNANSWERED AS DAVID MURDSTONE'S LIFE SLOWLY SLIPS AWAY... UNTIL THE PRIESTESS GAVE HIM A DRINK FROM THE POOL OF ETERNITY...
DRINK... IT IS THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE YOU I HOPE THE GODS FORGIVE US!


WHAT.. WHERE AM I.....
HE LIVES! HE AWAKENS!

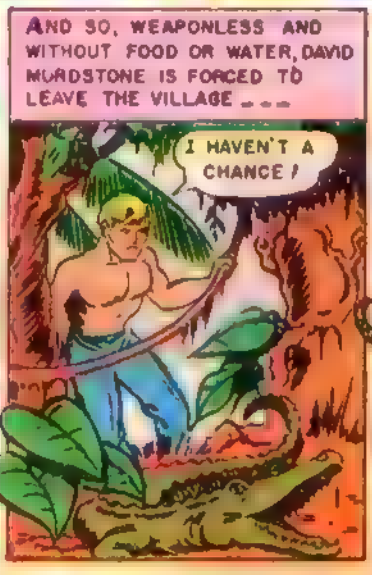
WHY I'M NOT EVEN SCRATCHED! HOW DID I GET HERE? WHO ARE YOU?
LIE DOWN OR YOUR SPEEDY RECOVERY MAY MAKE THEM SUSPECT MY CRIME!

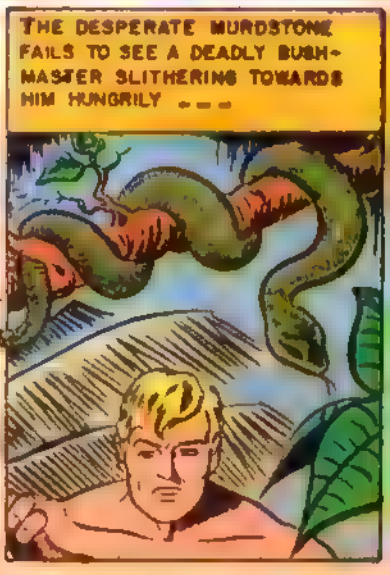
KONOCRY TELLS DAVID OF THE MYSTIC WAY HIS LIFE HAS BEEN SAVED...
YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT FAIRY TALE?
SO NOW I'M IMMORTAL, EH, PRINCESS?
YES, DAVID, IT IS SAID THAT.... OH! WHO IS THAT?


THE EVIL KONOCRY HAS BROKEN THE TABOO / SHE HAS GIVEN THE GIFT OF IMMORTALITY TO THE STRANGER /
SEIZE HER! SHE MUST DIE!


STOP! SHE HAS DONE NO HARM / SHE SAVED MY LIFE . . .
SILENCE, STRANGER! SINCE YOU KNEW NOTHING OF THE TABOO, WE WILL NOT PUNISH YOU. BUT GO...BEFORE WE CHANGE OUR MINDS. . .

GO? INTO THAT JUNGLE? A WHITE MAN WOULDN'T LAST A MILE IN THAT UNDERBRUSH /
YOU CAN NOT STAY / YOU ARE TABOO / BUT YOU WILL BE SAFE IN THE JUNGLE. NOTHING CAN HARM AN IMMORTAL . . .


AND SO, WEAPONLESS AND WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER, DAVID MURDSTONE IS FORCED TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE . . .
I HAVEN'T A CHANCE /

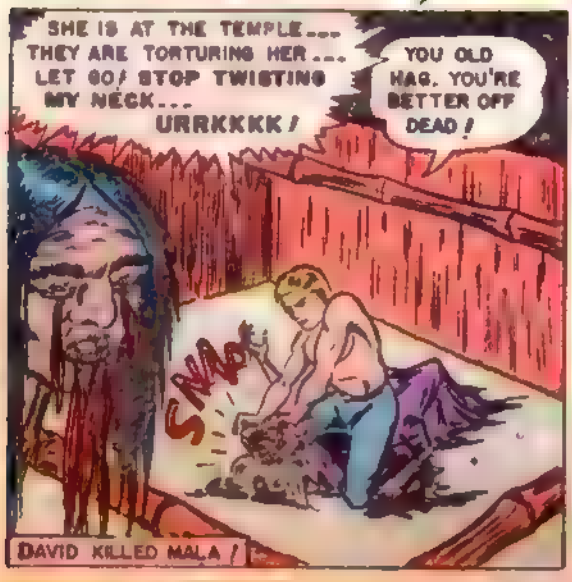

THE DESPERATE MURDSTONE FAILS TO SEE A DEADLY BUSH-MASTER SLITHERING TOWARDS HIM HUNGRILY . . .

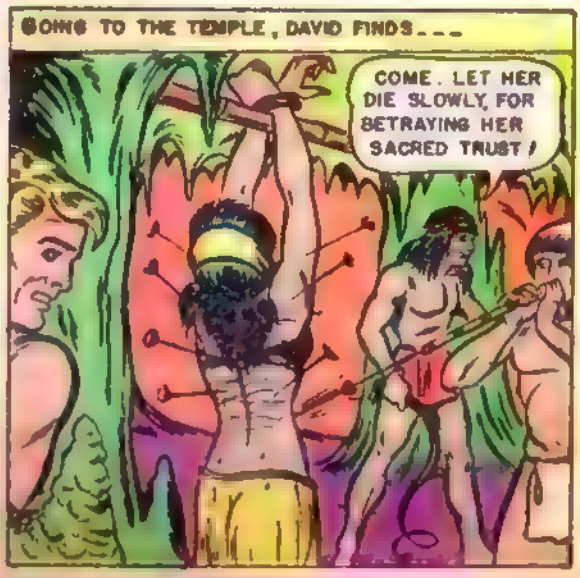
SUDDENLY / /
WHAT THE...

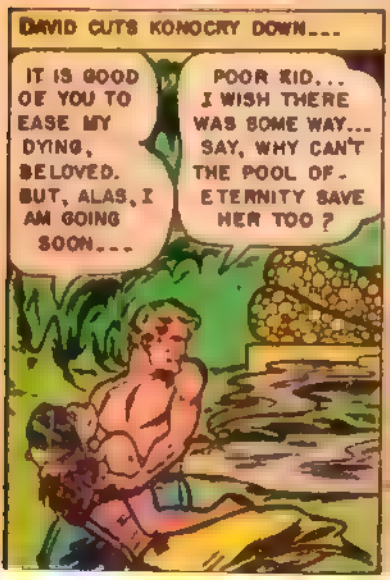
BUT DAVID MURDSTONE IS NOT THE ONE TO DIE /
I--I'VE BEEN BITTEN BY THE MOST DEADLY SNAKE IN THE JUNGLE / AND I DON'T EVEN FEEL IT / KONOCRY WAS TELLING THE TRUTH / I--I CAN'T BE KILLED / I CAN'T DIE /

NOTHING CAN STOP ME ! I'M IMMORTAL . I CAN BE THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN THE WORLD ! BUT FIRST THOSE NATIVES MUST BE TAUGHT A LESSON.... AND I MUST SAVE KONOCRY !

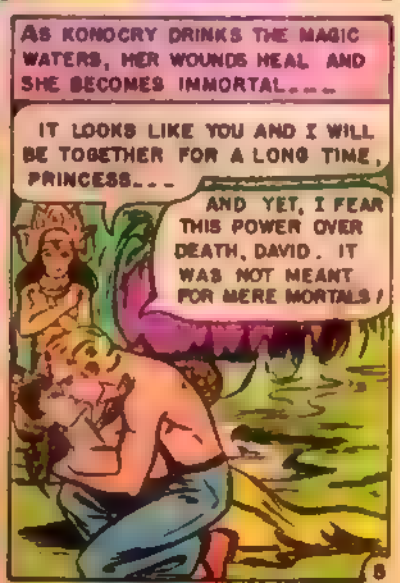
LATER THAT NIGHT DAVID RETURNS TO THE NATIVE VILLAGE ...
IT IS THE IMMORTAL ONE ! DO NOT KILL ME!
WHERE IS KONOCRY? TALK FAST, MALA !

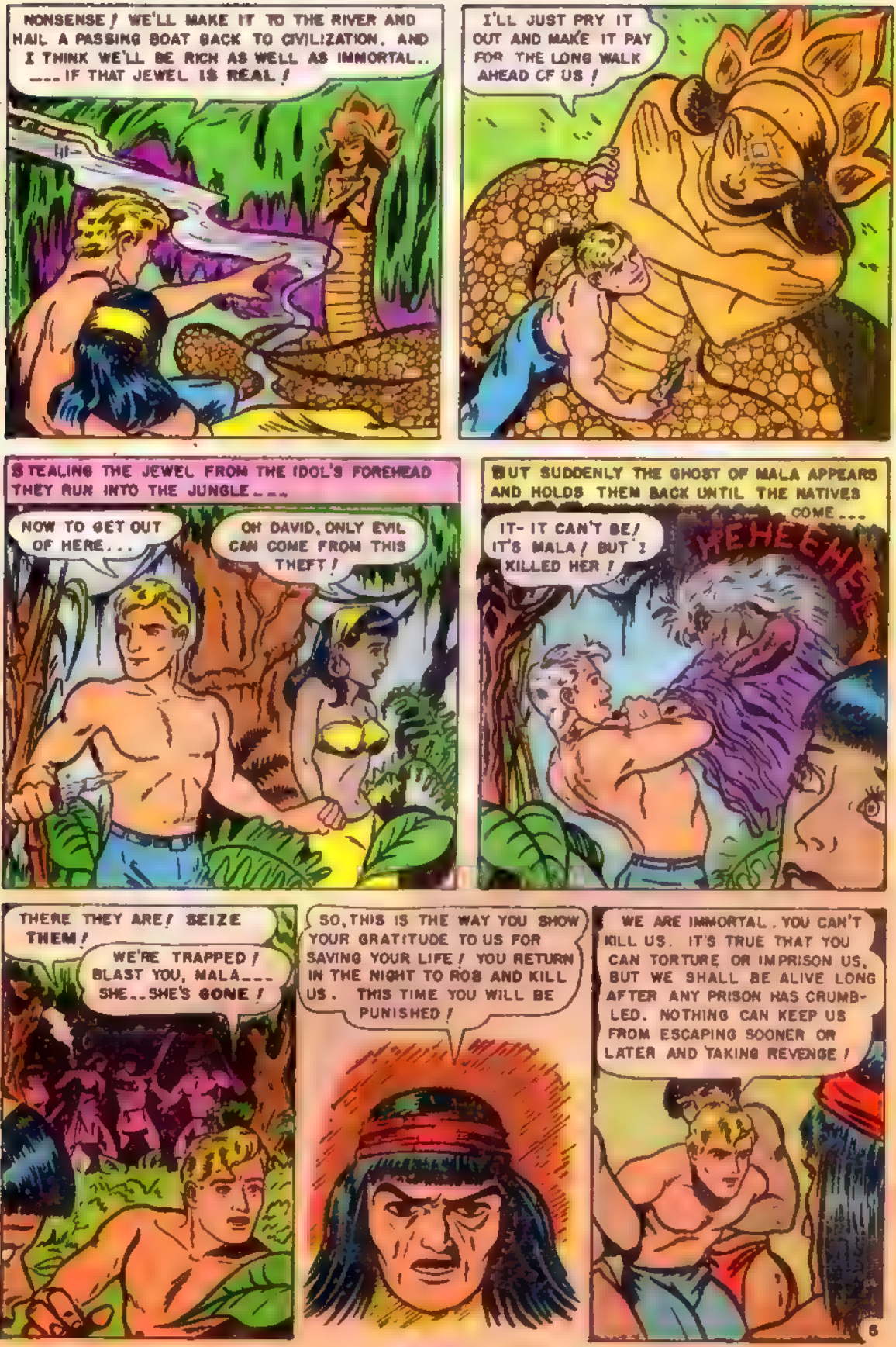

SHE IS AT THE TEMPLE.... THEY ARE TORTURING HER.... LET GO! STOP TWISTING MY NECK.... URRKKKK !
YOU OLD HAG. YOU'RE BETTER OFF DEAD !
SNAP
DAVID KILLED MALA !


GOING TO THE TEMPLE, DAVID FINDS....
COME. LET HER DIE SLOWLY, FOR BETRAYING HER SACRED TRUST !


DAVID CUTS KONOCRY DOWN....
IT IS GOOD OF YOU TO EASE MY DYING, BELOVED. BUT, ALAS, I AM GOING SOON....
POOR KID... I WISH THERE WAS SOME WAY... SAY, WHY CAN'T THE POOL OF ETERNITY SAVE HER TOO ?

I FEAR THE WRATH OF THE SNAKE MOTHER MORE THAN DEATH !
COME ON AND DRINK IT. IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE!


AS KONOCRY DRINKS THE MAGIC WATERS, HER WOUNDS HEAL AND SHE BECOMES IMMORTAL....
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU AND I WILL BE TOGETHER FOR A LONG TIME, PRINCESS....
AND YET, I FEAR THIS POWER OVER DEATH, DAVID. IT WAS NOT MEANT FOR MERE MORTALS !


NONSENSE! WE'LL MAKE IT TO THE RIVER AND HAIL A PASSING BOAT BACK TO CIVILIZATION. AND I THINK WE'LL BE RICH AS WELL AS IMMORTAL.. ...IF THAT JEWEL IS REAL!
I'LL JUST PRY IT OUT AND MAKE IT PAY FOR THE LONG WALK AHEAD OF US!
STEALING THE JEWEL FROM THE IDOL'S FOREHEAD THEY RUN INTO THE JUNGLE...
NOW TO GET OUT OF HERE...
OH DAVID, ONLY EVIL CAN COME FROM THIS THEFT!
BUT SUDDENLY THE GHOST OF MALA APPEARS AND HOLDS THEM BACK UNTIL THE NATIVES COME...
IT- IT CAN'T BE! IT'S MALA! BUT I KILLED HER!
HEHEEHEE
THERE THEY ARE! SEIZE THEM!
WE'RE TRAPPED! BLAST YOU, MALA... SHE..SHE'S GONE!
SO, THIS IS THE WAY YOU SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE TO US FOR SAVING YOUR LIFE! YOU RETURN IN THE NIGHT TO ROB AND KILL US. THIS TIME YOU WILL BE PUNISHED!
WE ARE IMMORTAL. YOU CAN'T KILL US. IT'S TRUE THAT YOU CAN TORTURE OR IMPRISON US, BUT WE SHALL BE ALIVE LONG AFTER ANY PRISON HAS CRUMBLED. NOTHING CAN KEEP US FROM ESCAPING SOONER OR LATER AND TAKING REVENGE!
6

LET THEM GO, CHIEF, LEST THEY WREAK TERRIBLE VENGEANCE ON OUR TRIBE!
IT'S WORKING! THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH US SO THEY'LL HAVE TO LET US GO...
NO! THEY HAVE BROKEN THE LAWS OF OUR TRIBE AND DESPOILED OUR GODS! THEY MUST PAY THE TERRIBLE PRICE OF THE TABOO!
AND SO, DAVID AND KONOCRY ARE SUBJECTED TO EVERY FIENDISH TORTURE THAT THE NATIVES CAN DEVISE...
ENJOY YOURSELVES, BLAST YOU! IT MAY TAKE YEARS, BUT I'LL GET LOOSE! WHEN I DO I'LL... OOOWWWWW—W!
HSSSSSS
...UNTIL EVEN THE CHIEF GROWS WEARY OF IT!
BAHH! THEY HAVE GROWN USED TO PAIN! LET US FINISH WITH THEM!
BUT HOW? WE CANNOT KILL THEM!
FOOL! HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN HOW WE JIVAROS DEAL WITH OUR ENEMIES?
NO! NO! ANYTHING BUT THAT!
AND SO, THOUGH THE JIVAROS BEHEADED THEM, DAVID MURDSTONE AND THE GIRL KONOCRY, HAVING DRUNK FROM THE POOL OF ETERNITY, COULD NOT DIE. NOR WILL THEY...EVER!
OH, DAVID, SAVE ME! SAVE ME! EEAHHHH!!
AS THE OLD HAG, MALA, HAD SAID... "THERE ARE THINGS FAR WORSE THAN DEATH"!
HELP US, SOMEONE... TAKE PITY ON US... KONOCRY AND I ARE STILL ALIVE!
ALAS, NO ONE CAN HELP US, DAVID, AND WE CAN NEVER DIE!
The end...

TERROR OF THE SLEEPING MONSTER!

"TO BE CREATIVE IS TO BE INDIVIDUAL", AN OLD PROVERB SAYS. HEH, HEH.... BUT WHAT IF THE ARTIST CREATES AN INDIVIDUAL WHO DESTROYS? SILLY YOU SAY? FANTASTIC YOU THINK? THEN READ ON, IF YOU DARE, AND FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF WHAT HAPPENS TO A SCULPTOR WHO CHISELS OUT A STATUE FROM HIS DREAMS ONLY TO FIND THAT IT IS AN IMAGE OF... **DEATH!!**

I MUST DESTROY THIS HORRIBLE STATUE .... SMASH IT INTO A HUNDRED PIECES! I'VE CREATED A MONSTER ...A CREATURE OF EVIL!

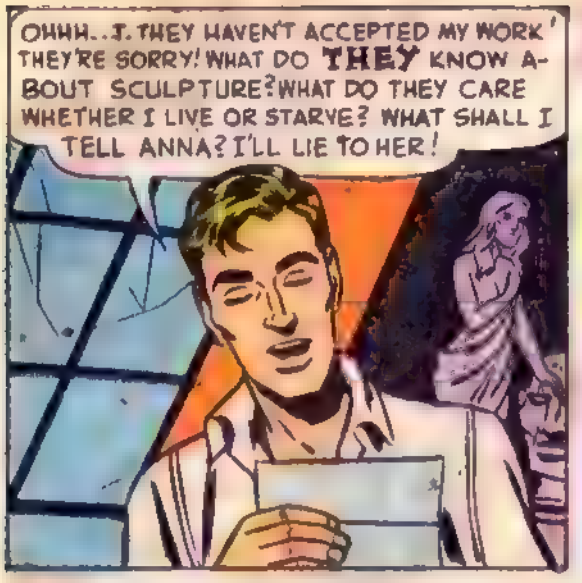
SAVE ME; OH! SAVE ME!

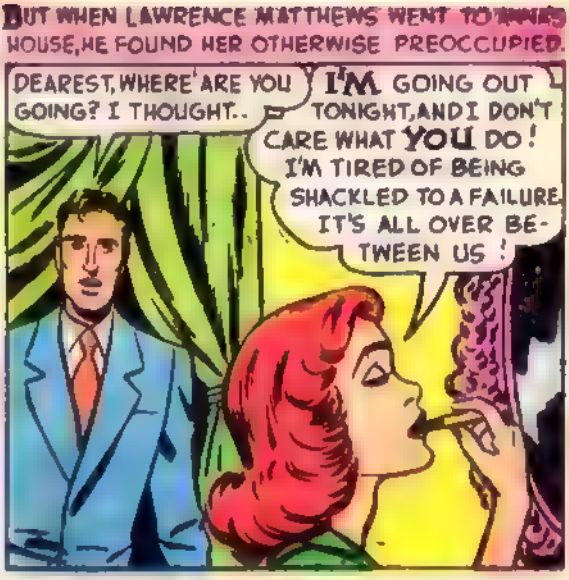
LAWRENCE MATTHEWS DIDN'T WANT MUCH OUT OF LIFE...ONLY A CHANCE TO BE A SUCCESSFUL SCULPTOR SO HE COULD MARRY THE BEAUTIFUL ANNA. BUT TO DO THAT, HE HAD TO BE THE OTHER--AND THAT WAS HOW IT ALL BEGAN...

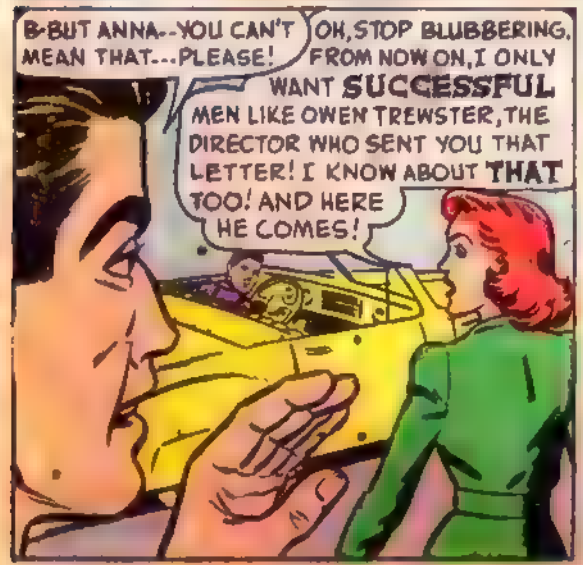
LETTER FOR MR. MATTHEWS!

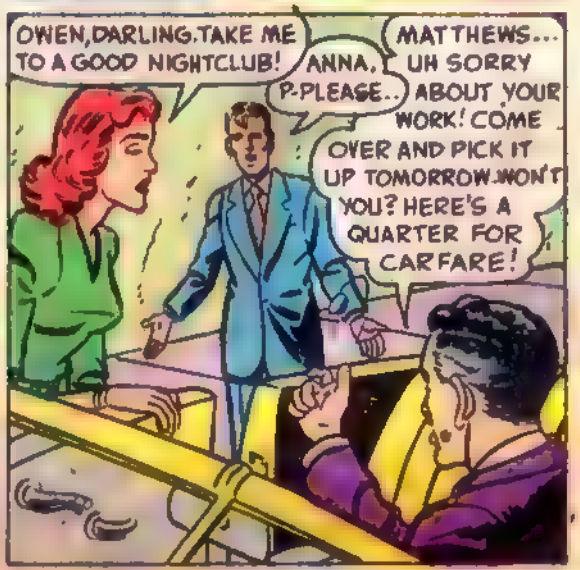
THERE'S A LETTER FOR ME..M-MAYBE FROM THE ART INSTITUTE!

YES, IT IS! THEY MUST HAVE LIKED MY ENTRIES TO SEND ME A REPLY SO SOON! I'LL HAVE MONEY, SUCCESS AND ANNA.

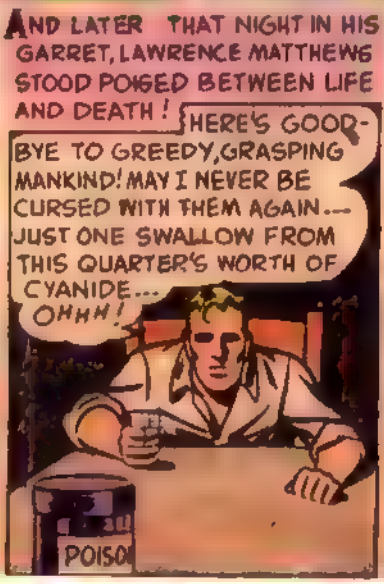

OHHH..I..THEY HAVEN'T ACCEPTED MY WORK! THEY'RE SORRY! WHAT DO THEY KNOW ABOUT SCULPTURE? WHAT DO THEY CARE WHETHER I LIVE OR STARVE? WHAT SHALL I TELL ANNA? I'LL LIE TO HER!


BUT WHEN LAWRENCE MATTHEWS WENT TO ANNA'S HOUSE, HE FOUND HER OTHERWISE PREOCCUPIED.
DEAREST, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? I THOUGHT..
I'M GOING OUT TONIGHT, AND I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU DO! I'M TIRED OF BEING SHACKLED TO A FAILURE. IT'S ALL OVER BETWEEN US!


B-BUT ANNA--YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT...PLEASE!
OH, STOP BLUBBERING. FROM NOW ON, I ONLY WANT SUCCESSFUL MEN LIKE OWEN TREWSTER, THE DIRECTOR WHO SENT YOU THAT LETTER! I KNOW ABOUT THAT TOO! AND HERE HE COMES!

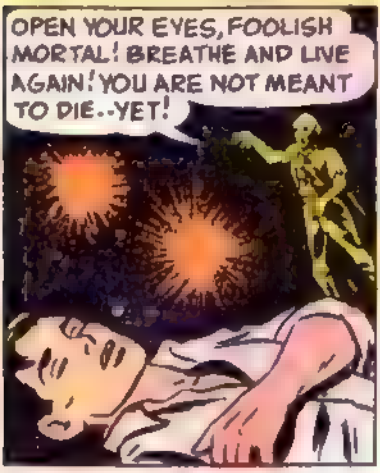

OWEN, DARLING. TAKE ME TO A GOOD NIGHTCLUB!
ANNA, P-PLEASE..
MATTHEWS... UH SORRY ABOUT YOUR WORK! COME OVER AND PICK IT UP TOMORROW. WON'T YOU? HERE'S A QUARTER FOR CARFARE!

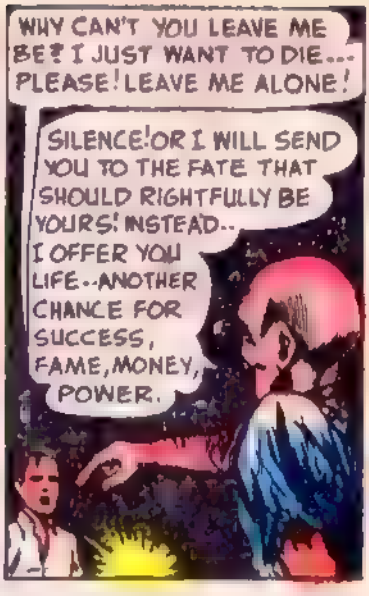
I'M A FAILURE, A QUARTER HE GAVE ME... HA, HA...--A QUARTER! I'LL PUT IT TO GOOD USE..YES..TO GOOD USE!

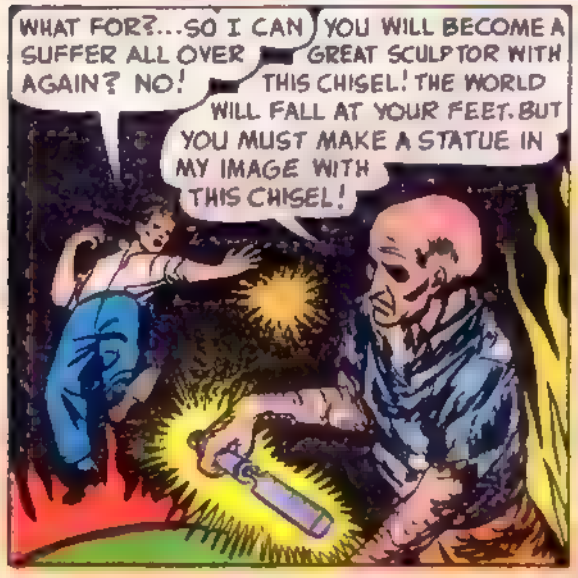

AND LATER THAT NIGHT IN HIS GARRET, LAWRENCE MATTHEWS STOOD POISED BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH!
HERE'S GOOD-BYE TO GREEDY, GRASPING MANKIND! MAY I NEVER BE CURSED WITH THEM AGAIN... JUST ONE SWALLOW FROM THIS QUARTER'S WORTH OF CYANIDE...
OHHH!
POISON

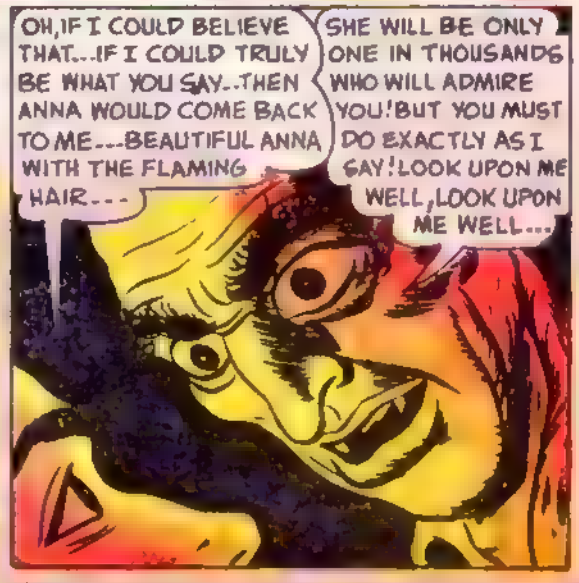
COUGH--COUGH--"FOR RATS". I TOLD THE DRUG STORE CLERK.."THIS CYANIDE IS FOR RATS".. ..COUGH--COUGH--AND THAT'S WHAT I AM...NOT FIT TO LIVE!--AAAAAAAARGHHH!
2

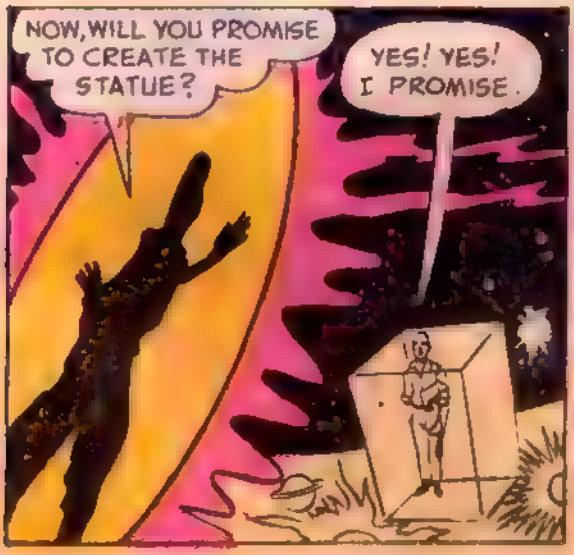
AND LAWRENCE MATTHEWS BREATHED WHAT NORMALLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN HIS LAST, BUT SOMETHING ELSE HAPPENED---



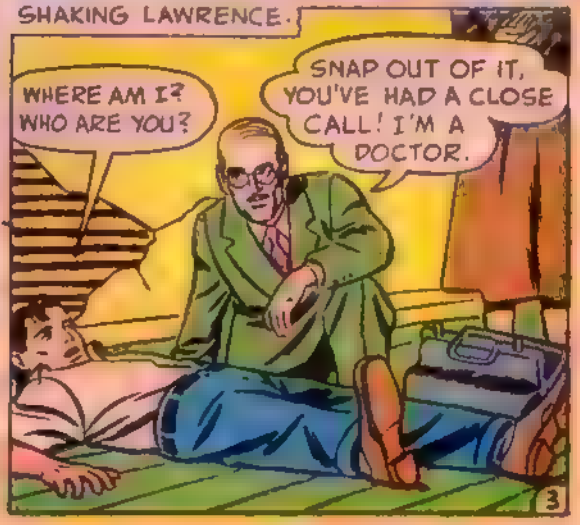


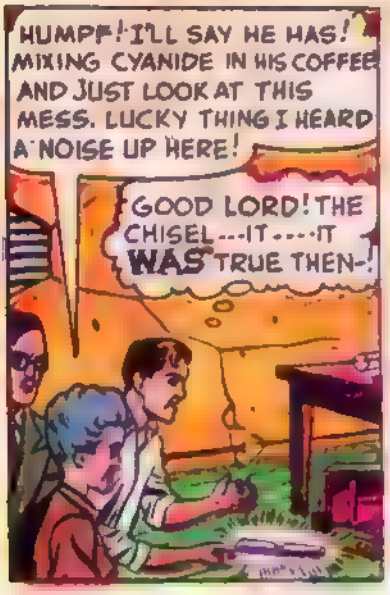


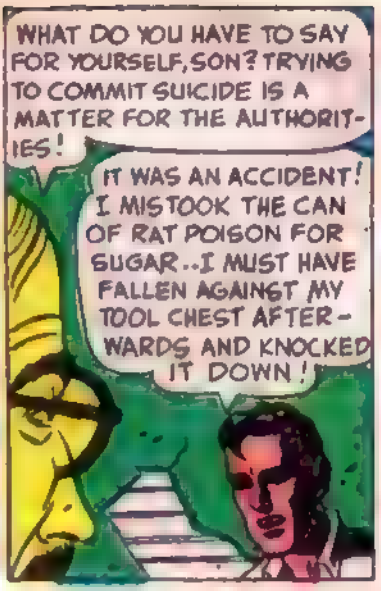




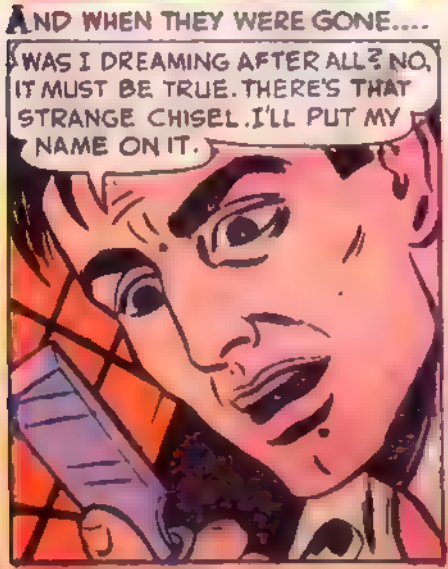
THEN SUDDENLY A HUMAN HAND WAS SHAKING LAWRENCE.



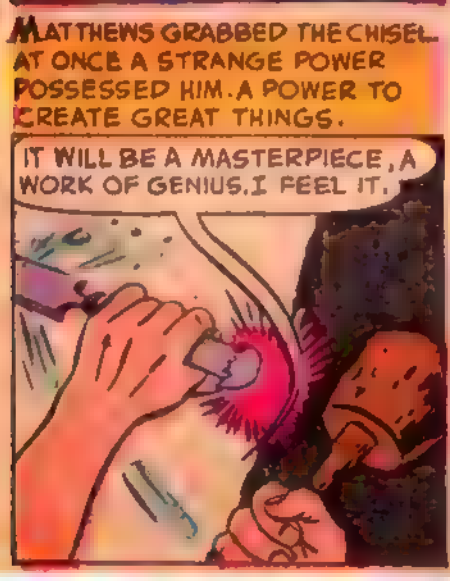

HUMPF! I'LL SAY HE HAS! MIXING CYANIDE IN HIS COFFEE AND JUST LOOK AT THIS MESS. LUCKY THING I HEARD A NOISE UP HERE!
GOOD LORD! THE CHISEL---IT----IT WAS TRUE THEN-!

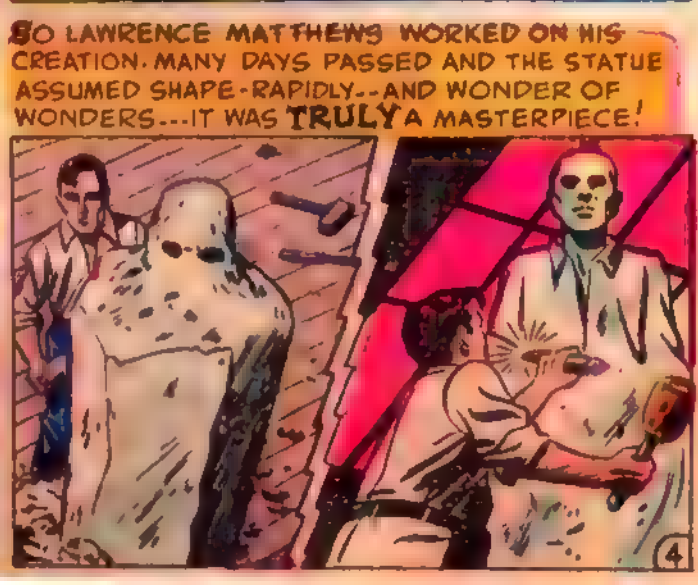

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOURSELF, SON? TRYING TO COMMIT SUICIDE IS A MATTER FOR THE AUTHORITIES!
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! I MISTOOK THE CAN OF RAT POISON FOR SUGAR..I MUST HAVE FALLEN AGAINST MY TOOL CHEST AFTERWARDS AND KNOCKED IT DOWN!

HUMM---I DON'T KNOW, IT SOUNDS PLAUSIBLE, BUT--
AW, COME ON, DOC! GIVE HIM A BREAK! HE'S ALL RIGHT NOW!

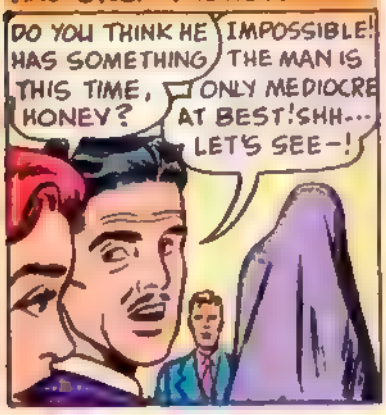

AND WHEN THEY WERE GONE....
WAS I DREAMING AFTER ALL? NO, IT MUST BE TRUE. THERE'S THAT STRANGE CHISEL. I'LL PUT MY NAME ON IT.

THAT FACE IS STILL IN MY MIND. THOSE EYES..HOW THEY BURNED! YES, I MUST KEEP MY PROMISE!

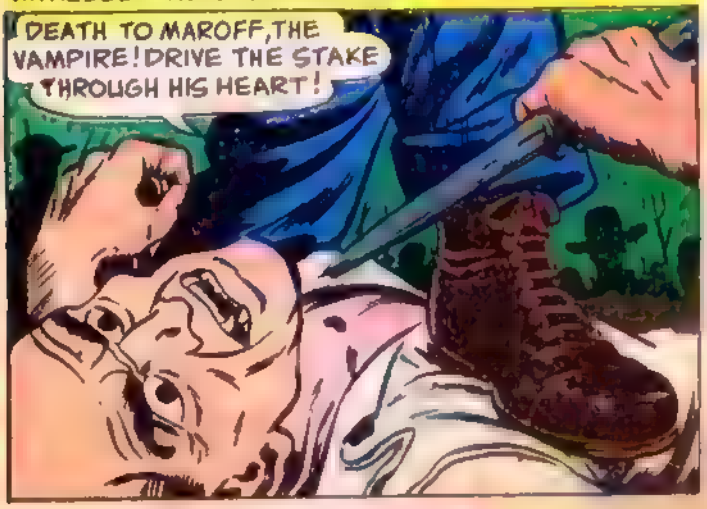

MATTHEWS GRABBED THE CHISEL. AT ONCE A STRANGE POWER POSSESSED HIM. A POWER TO CREATE GREAT THINGS.
IT WILL BE A MASTERPIECE, A WORK OF GENIUS. I FEEL IT.


SO LAWRENCE MATTHEWS WORKED ON HIS CREATION. MANY DAYS PASSED AND THE STATUE ASSUMED SHAPE-RAPIDLY--AND WONDER OF WONDERS---IT WAS TRULY A MASTERPIECE!

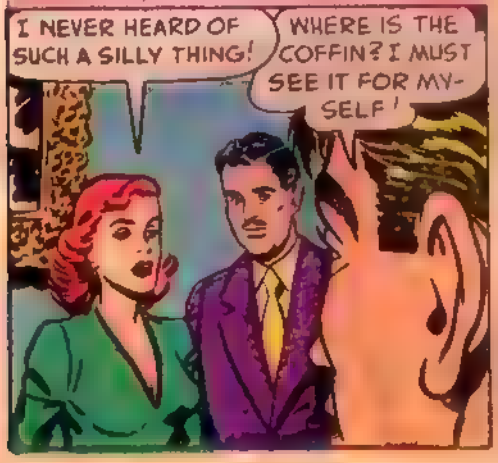
THEN MATTHEWS BEGGED FOR A CHANCE TO HAVE HIS CREATION UNVEILED AT THE ART INSTITUTE. AND IN THE GROUP THAT HAD COME TO MOCK HIM WERE ANNA AND OWEN TREWSTER...



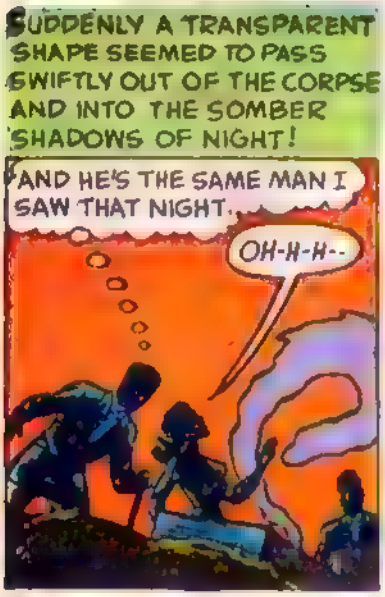
AND OWEN TREWSTER REMEMBERED BACK TO THAT HORRIBLE DAY WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG BOY OF TEN—WHO WITNESSED THE EXECUTION OF A VAMPIRE!



WHEN A FRIGHTENED TREWSTER TOLD THIS TO LAWRENCE MATTHEWS AND ANNA, AFTER ALL HAD GONE ...



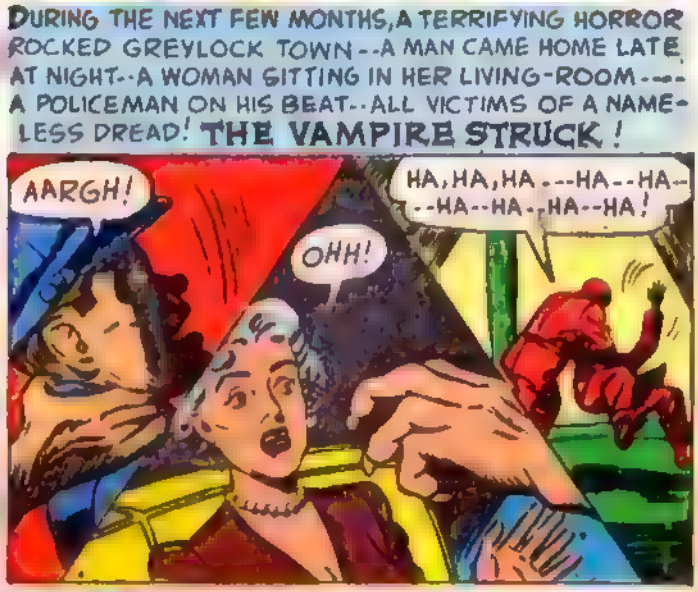
AND AFTER PERSUADING THE ART DIRECTOR TO DRIVE THEM BACK TO THAT DREADED TOWN, MATTHEWS DUG UP THE ROTTED COFFIN... AND A CHISEL!


SUDDENLY A TRANSPARENT SHAPE SEEMED TO PASS SWIFTLY OUT OF THE CORPSE AND INTO THE SOMBER SHADOWS OF NIGHT!
AND HE'S THE SAME MAN I SAW THAT NIGHT...
OH-H-H--

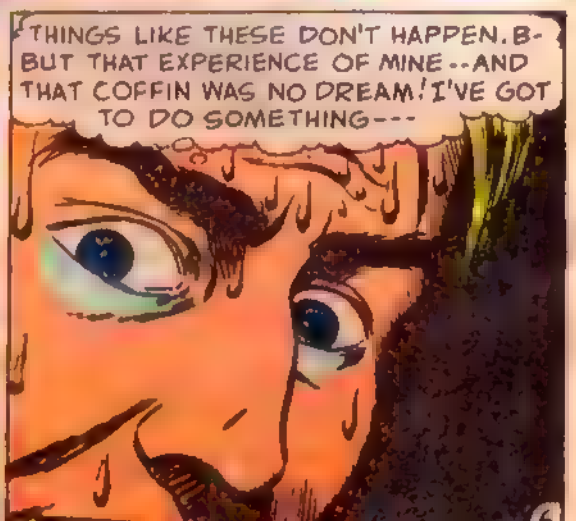
ANNA'S FAINTED! THAT--THAT THING IS EVIL, LET'S GET OUT OF THIS CRAZY PLACE!
YOU'RE RIGHT! PUT THAT LID BACK ON--- QUICKLY!

TWO HOURS LATER, AFTER OWEN TREWSTER HAD TAKEN THE SCULPTOR AND THE GIRL TO THEIR HOMES, HE WENT TO HIS OWN APARTMENT--
NO, NO!! MAROFF DON'T KILL ME -----GO BACK TO YOUR GRAVE!!
YOU ARE THE FIRST, TREWSTER! ONLY THE FIRST!

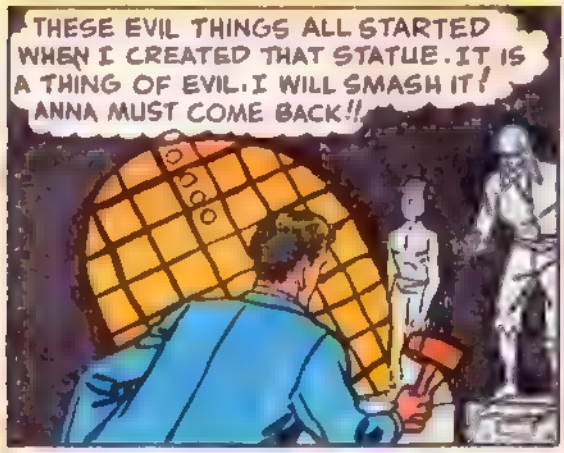
NO--NO--! GET AWAY FROM ME HELP!! AIIIIIIIIEEE!
HA, HA, HA-- THE OTHERS OF GREYLOCK TOWN WILL SOON FOLLOW YOU!


DURING THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, A TERRIFYING HORROR ROCKED GREYLOCK TOWN--A MAN CAME HOME LATE AT NIGHT--A WOMAN SITTING IN HER LIVING-ROOM---A POLICEMAN ON HIS BEAT--ALL VICTIMS OF A NAMELESS DREAD! THE VAMPIRE STRUCK!
AARGH!
OHH!
HA, HA, HA---HA--HA--HA--HA--HA--HA!

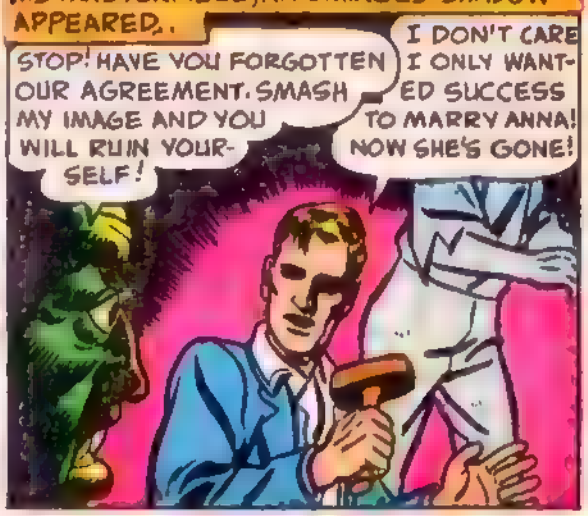
AND IN THE NEW HOME OF THE NOW SUCCESSFUL MATTHEWS---
FIRST IT WAS TREWSTER---NEXT THESE HORRIBLE DEATHS!--AS IF A--A VAMPIRE ATTACKED THEM--AND NOW ANNA HAS DISAPPEARED!
MYSTERY DEATHS CONTINUE IN GREYLOCK. ANNA VALE DISAPPEARS.

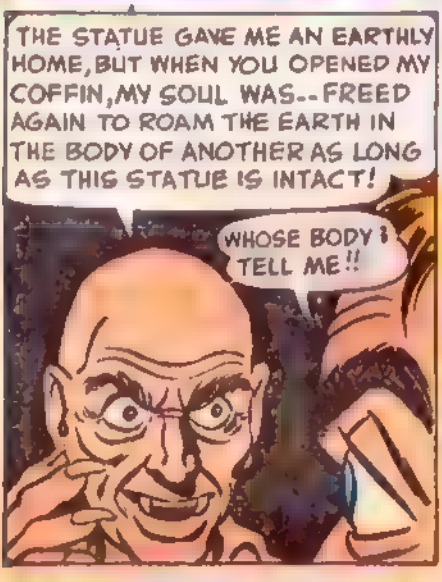

THINGS LIKE THESE DON'T HAPPEN. B-BUT THAT EXPERIENCE OF MINE--AND THAT COFFIN WAS NO DREAM! I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING---

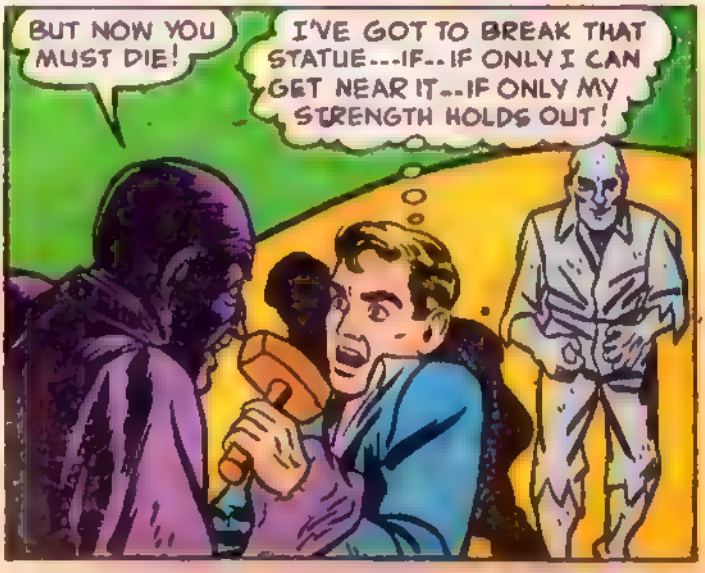
SO LAWRENCE MATTHEWS DECIDED THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING TO DO-LATER THAT NIGHT, IN THE DESERTED ART GALLERY OF THE ART INSTITUTE----

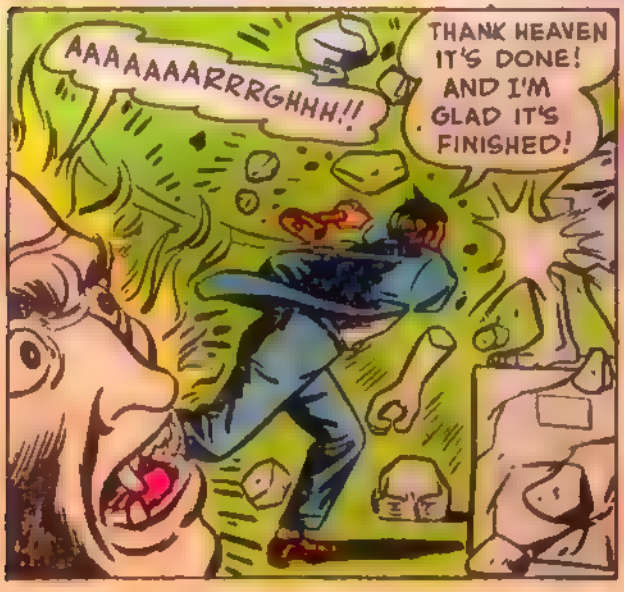


AS HE RAISED HIS HAMMER TO DESTROY HIS MASTERPIECE, AN OMINOUS SHADOW APPEARED..

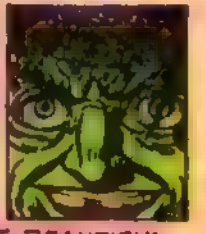


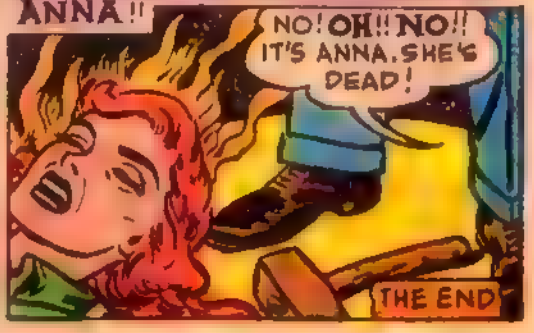






AND AS LAWRENCE MATTHEWS LOOKED DOWN AT THE HORROR THAT WAS SHRIVELING OUT OF EXISTENCE, IT SLOWLY CHANGED TO THE BODY IT HAD TAKEN WHEN IT WAS LIBERATED FROM THE GRAVE---THAT OF THE BEAUTIFUL ANNA!!





STRANGE GROTTO OF DEATH

By ELLEN LYNN

"Will you sign the register here, sir?"

The proprietor of the River's Edge Inn, near old New Orleans, smiled cordially and introduced himself to me: "I am Harvey Toren." We shook hands and I told him I was Gary Allen. He seemed about thirty—four or five years older than I. We talked quite a while, before I was shown to my room. He seemed a pleasant chap and I felt I would enjoy my stay.

Early the next morning when I left the Inn, for the river, Harvey Toren was nowhere around. Outside there was a hot, rosy haze over everything—even over the lush, green foliage. I walked quickly in the morning stillness, when I was startled by a sound behind me. Turning, I saw an old woman—a toothless hag—leaning on a stick.

"What Y' doin', young fella?" she croaked

"Going fishing," I answered.

"Don't go swimmin'!" she warned 'There's a man-eatin' alligator in the river."

When I laughed off her fears, assuring her I could handle myself in the water, she became angry.

"Fool!" she cried out. "Two men have been killed by that 'gator this past year! But I warned ya!" And she walked into the shrubs, disappearing from sight as mysteriously as she had come.

I was wearing swimming trunks under my slacks, and I slipped out of my clothes, leaving them by the trunk of a tree at the river's edge. The water was misty green; it looked cool and inviting. The air was weirdly still, but a sudden rippling on the water made me stare hard, as I remembered the old hag's warning. Then the surface turned calm—nothing appeared—but I decided not to swim; I'd use one of the canoes belonging to the Inn.

Drifting in the tropical waters, I almost dozed in the humid heat, the air acting like a drug on my senses, when I was startled by a jolt. Abruptly awakened to full awareness, I was horrified to see the saw-edged jaws of an alligator widely agape moving closer to the flimsy canoe. I broke out into a cold sweat and raised my paddle, hoping I could strike a hard enough blow between its eyes at least to stun the 'gator. As its deadly jaws clamped over the side of the canoe, I struck a wild blow and felt myself being hurled into the water. There was sharp sting on my head and in the flash of a moment, as I blacked out, I saw myself carried bodily between the tremendous jaws of the river beast; I saw the upper teeth coming down upon me and froze stiff—as I went into a faint.

I opened my eyes in a world of aquamarine and rose hues. Was I dead? No, something was dragging my arm and I was floating on my back. My head felt light and giddy. I turned it and saw, incredibly, a beautiful girl, her long, yellow hair floating behind her. Her white arm was linked in mine and she was strongly and gracefully drawing me through the water. We stopped at the entrance to a grotto, and holding my hand she led me inside. It was a luxuriously furnished room, a blue-fire burning brightly in the hearth. In front of the fireplace a table was set for two and we both sat down to eat. Facing her, I studied her exquisite beauty. Our eyes met, and she smiled a sad, enchanting smile. Vaguely I wondered how she and I could be living, breathing in a grotto under the river, but those thoughts never lingered long. Vaguely, I wondered, too, how I got there and why she scarcely spoke. Yet I wasn't too curious; I was content. Suddenly she said:

"I am Lana. I brought you here to my home."

"I thought the alligator had killed me. My name is Gary Allen," I replied.

"You are to stay here and help me with my work. I collect the largest and most beautiful pearls from the bi-valves. Come with me."

We swam together some distance from the Grotto where the water was a darker green and

Meet The Man...

Who Can Tell You How To Lick

PIMPLES

ACNE AND ALL OTHER EXTERNALLY CAUSED SKIN BLEMISHES And Make Them

DISAPPEAR FROM SIGHT...

instantly!

Here is Mr. John A. Rubino Ph.G. — a well known pharmacist who has spent almost 20 years trying to solve one of the most vexing problems of youth — and adults too — unsightly, acne pimples, blackheads and similar externally caused skin conditions.

They are indeed a serious problem, for nothing can do more to ruin your chances of success and popularity than a face made ugly with pimples and blackheads. And, if neglected, acne pimples may leave permanent scars and pits.

Mr. Rubino, after much experimenting and research in cooperation with doctors and chemists, found what he was seeking — a formula that would lick acne pimples and other externally caused skin blemishes. He succeeded beyond his fondest expectations and he was so proud of his treatment that he gave it his own name — **RUBIN-EX**

HE BLESSES RUBIN-EX "No one can realize the humiliation — almost disgrace — of a face marred by pimples and blackheads I had them so bad that I felt no one wanted to look at me Today my pimples are gone — and I bless Rubin-Ex — that did it — Mr. Geo I.R. Long Island

LUCKY DAY FOR HER! For years I was embarrassed and ashamed of my pimply face and blotchy complexion It was a lucky day for me when I was told about Rubin-Ex My pimples disappeared from sight instantly and my complexion improved 100%.—Miss Jane S.L. Bronx

DOUBLE ACTION! DOUBLE QUICK RESULTS!

The sensational Rubin-Ex treatment works two ways

A Makes acne pimples and all other skin blemishes INSTANTLY DISAPPEAR FROM SIGHT

B Its medication cleans up pimples, blackheads

When thousands of tiny oil glands discharge more oil than your skin can absorb, the excess oil picks up and holds tiny particles of dust dirt, grime grit bacteria. This foreign matter soon clogs up and enlarges your pores form blackheads cause infection and soon you have a fine crop of ugly red acne pimples.

Rubin-Ex FORMULA #1 is a special cleaning agent that really gets down in the skin pores and thoroughly cleans them out as no soap can. It also removes excess oil thus correcting excessive oiliness in your skin, one of the principal causes of pimples and blackheads.

Rubin-Ex FORMULA #2 is great news. When applied to your face it makes pimples and other unsightly blemishes disappear from sight instantly.

And while it is hiding your ugly blemishes from critical eyes its medicine is actually at work to clean them up. It contains an ingredient that relieves the fiery itching, another to soothe and heal the irritation and still another which gently and harmlessly flakes off the dead hard outer skin leaving your face and complexion much smoother and clearer. You can use Rubin-Ex day and night for it is neutral when applied and does not interfere with make up. Makes an excellent powder base.

HOW YOU MAY TRY RUBIN-EX AT OUR RISK

Mr. Rubino is so sure that his treatment will improve your skin and complexion in just 10 days that he is making this No Risk offer. He says I use Rubin-Ex for 10 days. If you do not notice a marked improvement in your skin and complexion if you are not entirely pleased and happy with results your money will be refunded at once. So start now for a clearer lovelier skin and complexion the magic way to popularity and success. Order Rubin-Ex today. MAIL COUPON NOW.

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MR JOHN A RUBINI PHG.
SKINTEX CORP., 69-47 216 St., Dept. MA Bayside, L. I., N. Y.

Dear Mr Rubino: Please rush me in plain wrapper complete Rubin-Ex treatment (Formula #1 and #2). It is understood that if I am not completely satisfied with the improvement in my complexion in just 10 days you will return my money. I, Find enclosed $2 Cash, Check or Money Order. You are to pay all postal charges.

Name _____ CHECK ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE

Address _____ CHECK COMPLEXION ☐ FAIR ☐ DARK

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

APO-FPO Countries—Foreign Countries—add 50c—No C.O.D.

much colder. Glimmering through some strange-looking, enormous fronds was a huge pile of the most lustrous, opalescent pearls anyone could possibly imagine. Together we sat cutting open the bivalves, extracting the pearls and adding them to the pile.

Time passed in this under-water Eden. Day after day, though I lost track of time, we pursued the delightful occupation of collecting these gorgeous pearls, swimming together in unbelievably beautiful waters, eating of strange and delicious foods. One day the lovely Lana stood close to me and twined her white arms around my neck. The blood raced to my head as I kissed her cool lips. We held each other tight, happy in this wild, unworldly love. But suddenly she turned away.

"Darling," she said, "you must leave this place; you must return to the upper world without delay."

"But, sweet," I protested, "I love you. I want to stay here with you forever."

An odd expression came over her face. Quickly, she grabbed my arm, entwining hers through it and with powerful strokes pulled me up, up. We ascended rapidly through the dark waters when I felt my arm released. I looked back and saw my beautiful Lana swimming rapidly away under the waters.

I lay on the grass, under the glaring sun. There was the tree and my clothes still lying at the roots. Full of the thought of Lana, my love for her and the strange, happy life I had led with her under the river, I went back to the Inn. Harvey, the Innkeeper had spied me from the windows and came rushing toward me. He asked dozens of questions; they had given me up as lost—another victim of the man-eating alligator. The overturned canoe had been found far down the river.

Over a drink I told my fantastic story. I described the beautiful Lana and told Harvey of my love, and how she sent me away so hurriedly. His face blanched and he gasped, "Lana! What are you telling me? You're dreaming. This whole story is a figment of your imagination. You must have heard the story of Lana, who drowned herself in the river a year ago, after I killed her sweetheart in a duel. She never forgave me. When you were hurt this fantasy arose in your mind."

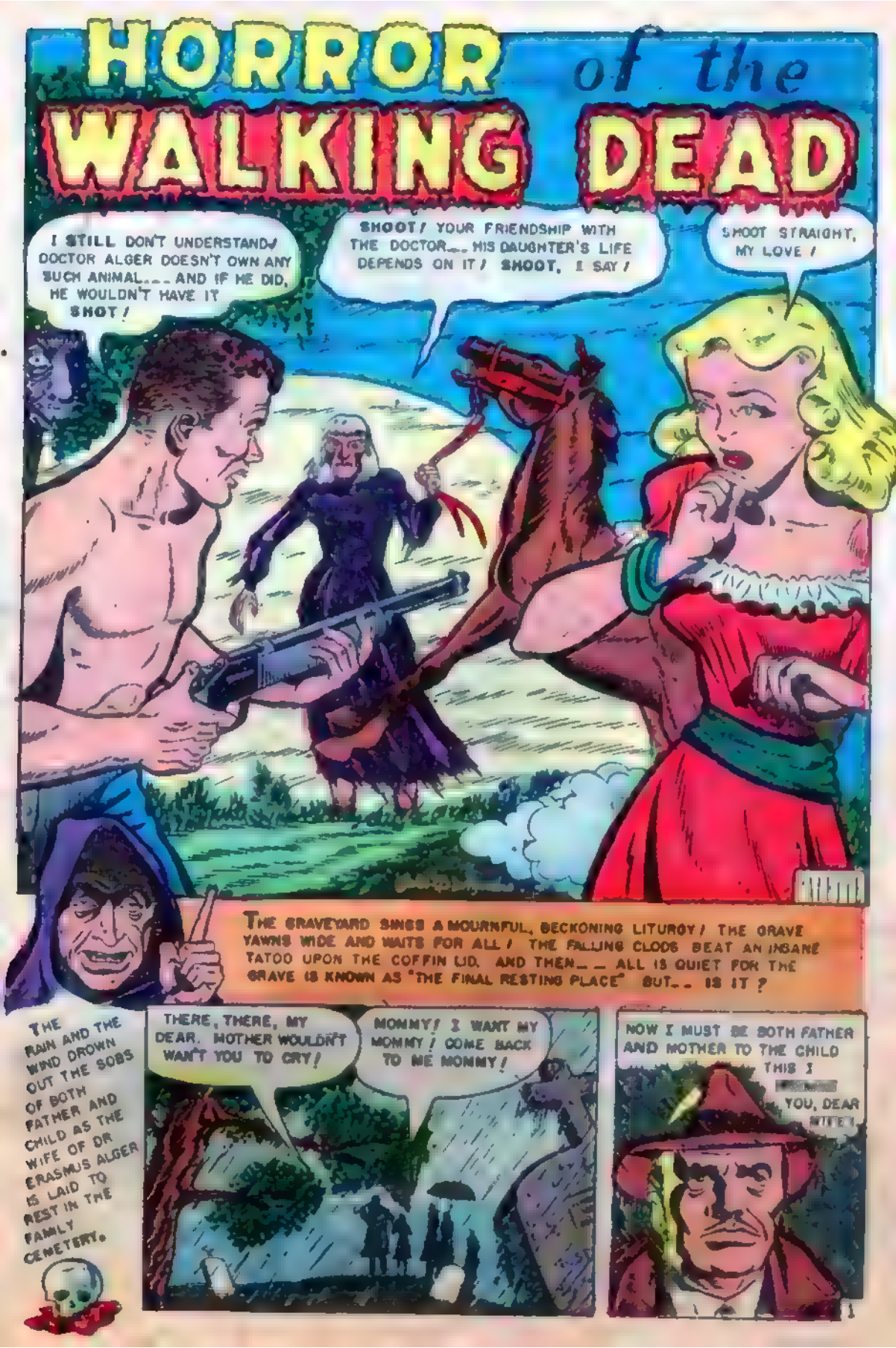
I was becoming convinced by Harvey's version, when I glanced down at my fingers. They were clutching a wet scarf. Slowly I opened out the silken square and recognized it as one of Lana's—which she often wore around her long hair! At the same time, Harvey yelled—"Where did you get that scarf? It was—Lana's!" There was a breathless silence between us as we stared at each other. It was clear that Harvey was beginning to wonder about my story. Could it be true?

That evening we both went in swimming trunks down to the river's edge. Wordlessly we got into a canoe and paddled to the spot that I remembered encountering the alligator. In his belt, Harvey had placed a sharp-bladed dagger. I stood up and dove into the water; Harvey, the dagger between his teeth, followed after me. We struggled down, down—when I spied the Grotto. There swimming back and forth in front of the entrance was the alligator! Then it saw us coming. The tail swished angrily, churning up a white foam. Its eyes fell on me and then turned on Harvey. At once it made a terrific lunge toward him and a wild struggle between man and beast began. I tried desperately to come to Harvey's aid but that mighty tail kept twisting around and brushing me off as though I were a fly on a sleeve. I saw Harvey thrust his cruel dagger between the eyes of the monster—and then, to my horror, the mad 'gator clamped his jaws down on Harvey—breaking his spine.

I thought my turn was next. I wanted to swim away from that grotto—fast. But then the monster became still. Death had come to it, or so I thought. But incredibly, suddenly the alligator seemed to disintegrate, disappear and its place guarding the grotto was a familiar figure. It had the long yellow hair, the white skin and arms and legs of—Lana—now cold with long death. She seemed to be smiling, with a strange satisfaction.

Quickly I left that place of eerie beauty and death.

HORROR of the WALKING DEAD



THE YEARS MOVED SWIFTLY BY AND AS THEY DID DOCTOR ALGER FELT THAT HE WAS NOT KEEPING HIS GRAVESIDE PROMISE SO, THE GOOD DOCTOR DECIDED TO MARRY AGAIN...

CONGRATULATIONS, SIR.

THANK YOU, HANS

NOW KATHY WILL HAVE A MOTHER. SHE NEEDS ONE NOW THAT SHE HAS BEGUN TO NOTICE YOUNG MEN...ESPECIALLY HANS

WITHIN AN HOUR THE CEREMONY WAS OVER AND THE NEWLYWEDS AND WEDDING PARTY WERE AT THE RECEPTION...

WHERE'S KATHY? HAVE YOU SEEN HER?

SHE'LL BE BACK. YOU CAN'T TELL WITH THESE YOUNGSTERS.

DID YOU HEAR THAT? WHY, LESS THAN TEN YEARS. SEPERATE THEM

THE WEDDING FESTIVITIES CONCLUDED, THE DOCTOR, HIS BRIDE, HIS DAUGHTER AND HANS RETURNED TO THE DOCTOR'S RESIDENCE...

I ENJOYED HAVING MY FRIENDS ABOUT ME WISHING ME HAPPINESS.

KATHY, WHERE DID YOU DISAPPEAR TO DURING THE RECEPTION?

WHY... I...I...

THAT'S ALRIGHT, MY DEAR. I KNOW THAT I SHALL NEVER TAKE THE PLACE OF YOUR DEAR DEAD MOTHER... BUT I WILL TRY.. I WILL TRY!

THAT NIGHT, AFTER KATHY RETIRED, HER NEW MOTHER CAME TO HER...

WE'RE ALONE. NOW I CAN SAY WHAT I REALLY THINK! YOU HATE ME! YOU LEFT THE RECEPTION TO HUMILIATE ME!

WHA-WHAT? I HARDLY KNOW YOU... HOW COULD I HATE YOU?

YOU CAN'T FOOL ME. YOU HATE ME! YOU WENT TO YOUR MOTHER'S GRAVE! YOU THINK YOU ARE PRETTIER THAN I AM! BUT YOU'RE NOT... YOU'RE NOT!

WHY DO YOU SAY SUCH THINGS? WHAT HAVE I DONE TO YOU?

UNFORTUNATELY KATHY WAS TOO INNOCENT TO RECOGNIZE GREED AND ENVY ...ENVY OF HER YOUNG BEAUTY AND GREED FOR HER SHARE IN THE ESTATE! THE NEXT MORNING AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE...

FATHER.. I MUST SEE YOU AFTER BREAKFAST. PLEASE.

NOW, DEAR, YOUR FATHER'S A BUSY MAN. COME TO ME-- I'LL HELP YOU! BESIDES, HE'S PROMISED TO SHOW ME THE GROUNDS THIS MORNING!

LATER THAT MORNING THE DOCTOR ESCORTED HIS NEW WIFE ABOUT THE ALGER ESTATE...

ON YOUR LEFT ARE THE STABLES AND AHEAD, ON THAT HILLOCK, IS THE FAMILY BURIAL GROUND.

IS-IS YOUR FIRST WIFE BURIED THERE? SHOW ME HER GRAVE. I'D LIKE TO KNOW IF SHE APPROVES OF ME.

SO--THERE YOU ARE--SIX FEET DEEP/ AND--HERE I AM. ONLY YOUR CHILD STANDS BETWEEN ME AND THIS ESTATE AS SOON AS YOUR OLD FOOL OF A HUSBAND DIES!

COME, ROSAMUND. WE'D BETTER GO! THE AIR IS TURNING CHILLY!

THAT NIGHT ROSAMUND CONTINUED HER FAWNING OVER KATHY IN PUBLIC WHILE TAUNTING THE GIRL IN PRIVATE...

NICE TO HAVE YOU, HANS!

I HAD TO ASK HIM THREE TIMES, DADDY

JUST WHAT IS IT THAT YOU DO, MR. BRUGER? I'VE HEARD THAT YOU ARE A BLACKSMITH!

YES... THE BEST AND STRONGEST IN THE ENTIRE TERRITORY!

HOW INTERESTING, KATHY DEAR. I'M SURE THAT YOU'RE AN AUTHORITY ON SUCH THINGS!

AFTER DINNER THE TWO MEN LEFT THE WOMEN AND RETIRED TO THE LIBRARY FOR CIGARS AND BRANDY...

WHA... WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY?

IT'S TRUE, SIR. SHE'S MEAN TO KATHY! SHE SEEMS TO HATE KATHY. YOU'VE JUST NEVER NOTICED!

PREPOSTEROUS! I'VE NEVER HEARD OF ANYTHING MORE RIDICULOUS! SHE LOVES THE GIRL, SHE TOLD ME SO! BESIDES... YOU CAN SEE IT WHEN THEY ARE TOGETHER!

BUT, SIR ARE YOU WITH THEM ALL THE TIME?

AND SO, THE INSINUATIONS AND OTHER VERBAL CRUELTIES OF THE STEP-MOTHER CONTINUED. A FEW DAYS LATER, KATHY AGAIN WALKED OUT TO THE GRAVE OF HER MOTHER.

MOTHER, MOTHER... I NEED YOU SO WHY DOES SHE HATE ME? WHY? WHY?

EVEN AS KATHY APPEALED TO HER MOTHER HER STEP-MOTHER WAS SECRETLY WATCHING THE DISTRAUGHT GIRL.

AH.. THIS IS BETTER. IF I CAN GET HER COMMITTED TO THE ASYLUM I'LL AUTOMATICALLY BECOME HER GUARDIAN-- AND THE GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE!

I HEARD YOU! I SAW YOU! TALKING TO A DEAD WOMAN! NO ONE TALKS TO DEAD PEOPLE-- YOU MUST BE CRAZY!

WHAT? YOU! WHY DO YOU FOLLOW ME? WHY DO YOU SPY ON ME?

ANYWAY.. YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. THIS IS MY MOTHER'S GRAVE. I BRING ALL MY PROBLEMS TO HER!

DOES SHE HELP YOU? DOES SHE ANSWER YOU? NO! ANY DOCTOR WILL AGREE WITH ME, YOU'RE CRAZY. YOU SHOULD BE IN AN ASYLUM!

NOW THAT KATHY KNEW THAT HER STEP-MOTHER WOULD GO TO ANY LENGTHS TO GET RID OF HER, SHE DECIDED THAT SHE TOO MUST TAKE DESPERATE MEASURES. LATE THAT NIGHT...

THREE O'CLOCK! SURELY BY NOW EVERYONE WILL BE ASLEEP.

BONG! BONG! BONG!

I'LL GO TO MOTHER! ONLY MOTHER CAN HELP ME. SHE MUST, EVEN IF SHE IS DEAD!

IN A MATTER OF SECONDS KATHY WAS RUNNING OUT THROUGH THE WIND SWEPT NIGHT TOWARD THE GRAVE OF HER MOTHER...

SO SHE SAYS I'M CRAZY BECAUSE I TALK TO MOTHER. WANTS TO GET RID OF ME IN THAT WAY. I'LL SHOW HER.. I'LL GET MOTHER TO REALLY HELP ME, AND, I KNOW SHE WILL!

MOTHER.. YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING! I'VE NO ONE BUT HANS AND HE CAN'T HELP NOW. DO SOMETHING, MOTHER. DO SOMETHING! HELP ME!

KATHY WAITED BUT THERE CAME NO ANSWER..THERE CAME NO SOUNDS SAVE THOSE OF THE WIND LOUD IN THE TREES SLOWLY KATHY AROSE AND WALKED BACK THROUGH THE NIGHT THAT SEEMED DARKER NOW THAT HER LAST RECOURSE, HER DEAD MOTHER, HAD SEEMINGLY FAILED.

BUT AN HOUR LATER IN THE NEIGHBORING VILLAGE AN EVEN GREATER CLATTER THAN WAS BEING SET UP BY THE WIND WAS HEARD AT THE BARRED DOOR OF HANS, KATHY'S YOUNG LOVER...

IT'S FOUR THIRTY! WHO COULD BE WANTING ME AT THIS HOUR?

WHO IS THERE? WHO NEEDS ME AT THIS HOUR?

KATHY'S FATHER! HE SENT ME TO ASK A FAVOR... A JOB TO BE DONE IMMEDIATELY!

YOU ARE TO SHOOT THIS MARE AT ONCE..BY SOME MISTAKE THE DOCTOR INNOCULATED IT WITH A DEADLY SERUM! IT MUST BE KILLED BEFORE THE SERUM MULTIPLIES IN ITS BLOOD STREAM!

WHA-WHAT? YOU SAY THIS IS ONE OF THE DOCTOR'S HORSES? IT CAN'T BE....I HAVE SHOD THEM ALL!

IT'S A RECENT PURCHASE. QUICKLY, TAKE THE HORSE TO THE WOODS AND SHOOT IT! THE DOCTOR WILL SEE TO THE CARCASS TOMORROW!

WH-WELL IF THAT'S WHAT THE DOCTOR WANTS!

SHOOT! SHOOT! I SAY! THE DOCTOR AND KATHY DEPEND UPON YOU! EVERYTHING DEPENDS UPON YOU! SHOOT IF YOU LOVE KATHY!

A CLEAN SHOT... THE POOR BEAST WILL FEEL NO PAIN. BUT WHO ARE YOU?

THERE... 'TIS DONE. NOW FOR YOUR PAY, HANS BRUGER!

BAROOM!

GOLD CHAIN.. I GUARANTEE ITS PURITY!
GOLD CHAIN! WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU? YOU LOOK LIKE DEATH!
THE DEED DONE THE PUZZLED AND FRIGHTENED BLACKSMITH RETURNED HOME AND TO BED... BUT NOT TO SLEEP. . .
IT IS NOT LIKE THE DOCTOR TO DO SUCH A THING. I'LL WAIT UNTIL MORNING...BURY THE MARE, AND THEN GO TO THE DOCTOR AND SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!
IT CAN'T BE! THE HORSE IS GONE!
IT'S PREPOSTEROUS! NEITHER DO I INOCULATE MY HORSES... HAVE THEM SHOT...NOR SEND DEAD MESSENGERS!
WELL...I DID SHOOT A HORSE AND I WAS TOLD THAT IT WAS YOURS. AND SHE DID LOOK LIKE A DEAD WOMAN!
I HAVE IT! YOU WERE DREAMING OR MAYBE SOMEONE WAS PLAYING A PRANK ON YOU...ON US!
THAT COULD BE.... THEY'D KNOW I'D BE DOG TIRED AND THAT I'D COME TO YOU JUST THE WAY I HAVE!
COME HANS, LET'S TELL KATHY AND ROSAMUND ABOUT IT AND WE'LL ALL HAVE A GOOD LAUGH OVER AN EARLY BREAKFAST!
IT STILL DOES NOT SEEM VERY FUNNY TO ME!
SEE, THEY TOOK AN OLD MARE TO HANS AND HAD HIM SHOOT IT! CERTAINLY A BIZARRE JOKE, EH KATHY?
IT ALL SOUNDS HORRIBLE TO ME!
THE TRIO MOVED ON DOWN TO ROSAMUND'S DOOR...
ROSAMUND!
SOMETHING MUST BE WRONG!
I'D BETTER BREAK IN. THE DOOR'S LOCKED!

SHE HAS BEEN SHOT THROUGH THE HEAD! STAY BACK KATHY!
LET ME TO HER! THERE STILL MAY BE A CHANCE!
HOW TERRIBLE! I CAN'T LOOK!
IT TOOK THE DOCTOR BUT A FEW MINUTES TO DISCOVER THAT HIS RECENT BRIDE WAS PAST ALL HELP. THE THREE QUICKLY LEFT THE ROOM, STUNNED . . .
BUT WHO... WHO COULD HAVE DONE SUCH A THING?
OH, DADDY, I'M SO SORRY... ...FOR YOU!
YES...WHO? THERE'S A MYSTERY HERE, ALRIGHT. FIRST THE HORSE... THEN YOUR WIFE. BOTH SHOT FROM THE LEFT SIDE AND THROUGH THE HEAD!
THE CHAIN! I WAS PAID LAST NIGHT WITH THIS PIECE OF ANTIQUE CHAIN. HERE, LOOK AT IT!
YOU WERE PAID WITH IT LAST NIGHT? IMPOSSIBLE! THAT IS MY FIRST WIFE'S CHAIN-- SHE WAS BURIED WITH THAT CHAIN ABOUT HER NECK!!!
KATHY DIDN'T VENTURE OUT TO THE GRAVE OF HER AVENGING MOTHER UNTIL THREE DAYS HAD PASSED AFTER ROSAMUND'S FUNERAL . . .
HOW MOTHER BROUGHT ABOUT ROSAMUND'S TRANSFORMATION INTO THE MARE OR WHO IT WAS THAT LED THE HORSE TO YOU I'LL NEVER KNOW NOR DO I WANT TO!
BUT IT DID HAPPEN! THERE CAN BE NO OTHER ANSWER!
THE CHAIN IS GONE FROM YOUR MOTHER'S NECK, KATHY. HERE'S PROOF THAT THIS IS, OR WAS, YOUR MOTHER'S!
POOR MOTHER, RETURN IT TO HER SO THAT SHE MAY WEAR IT THROUGH ALL ETERNITY... AND WALK NO MORE!
The end...

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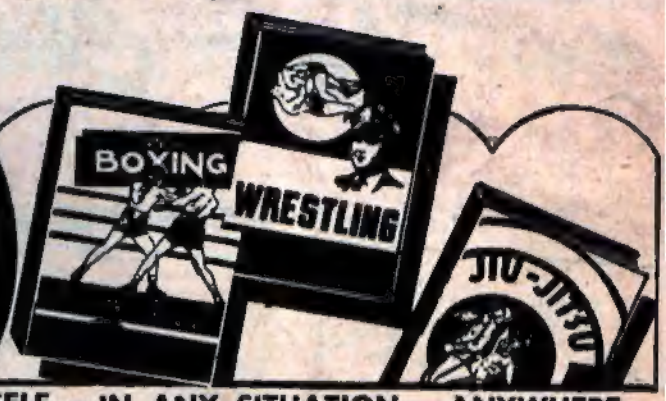

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